

AMENDED SPECIFICATION**METHOD FOR SUBSCRIBER AVAILABILITY IN A
RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM****Description**

The present invention pertains to a method for subscriber availability in a radio communications system.

If certain subscribers of a radio communication system act as service providers and fulfill certain services for other subscribers of the communication system who act as service users, it is desirable for the other subscribers to reach the service providers at service call numbers that are not changed and known to the service users. These call numbers are ideally based on the type of service offered and, for example, may have a hierarchical structure or group allocations if the services of the different service providers are also divided into such groups.

The state of the art includes document EP 0,431,453. This document describes the allocation of such hierarchical or group-related object designations to service providers in the form of call numbers. In this case, a service call number is, if so requested, temporarily assigned to a service provider with an individual call number with the temporary service call number being adapted to the type of service provided by the service provider. The composition of the assigned call number makes it possible to directly conclude the activity currently being carried out.

However, it is disadvantageous that a new allocation of call numbers to the respective subscriber environment is required for the subscriber who acts as the service provider. This requires complicated steps in the communication with the subscriber.

EP 0,753,976 relates to a virtual private network for subscribers of a mobile communications system, wherein for selected subscribers in addition to the regular logic subscriber data set a second logic subscriber data set can be created in order to register those subscribers as subscribers of a virtual private network. Through this second logic data set the subscriber can communicate within the virtual private network under certain conditions.

An individual second data set, i.e., a second subscriber identity, is assigned to each subscriber of the virtual private network, wherein this subscriber identity must be allocated for each new subscriber of the virtual private network and is not transferable. For alternating

subscribers, which want to be available under only one identity, the procedure described therein is not suitable.

Consequently, the present invention is based on the objective of developing a method which ensures that subscribers acting as service providers can be easily reached. This objective is attained with the characteristics of Claim 1.

Virtual communication networks (Virtual Private Network, VPN) are sufficiently known from the state of the art. These networks simulate a separate communication network that is actually situated within a real communication network. Utilization of this technology makes it possible to provide service identities in the form of subscriber environments in this virtual communication network with the corresponding subscriber data sets. If a subscriber who acts as a service provider requires a temporary object identification, it suffices to allocate the already predetermined subscriber environment with its data sets to the service provider. A reorganization of the service provider's own subscriber environment, e.g., by allocating one or more new call numbers, consequently is no longer necessary. In this case, an authorization check of the subscribers should be carried out, and an allocation of the subscriber data sets should only take place after a positive result of the check has been obtained to ensure that the subscriber environments that may have specific privileges can only be utilized by authorized persons. In this respect, automatic methods, e.g., for recognizing the individual subscriber identification of the concerned subscriber, or procedures to be carried out by the subscriber, e.g., the input of passwords, may be utilized.